

# GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

## Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide SB 08.015.2021

### GOD'S WILL BE DONE! – Acts 21:1-20

#### Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

We've probably asked God at some point, "What is Your will for my life?". Maybe we wanted to know God's will regarding the start of a new job or position, who to marry and when, whether or not we should pursue an educational degree, or when we should buy/sell a home. The list can go on and on. It is part of our nature to be focused on our affairs. However, God's ultimate will is the advancement of his kingdom (Dan 2:44), His glorification (1 Cor 10:31), and the salvation and sanctification of his children through His Son, Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:9). While fellow Christians urged Paul to not go to Jerusalem, Paul already knew he was chosen to suffer for Jesus Christ, just as he was called to serve Him. Paul understood God's will and the rough road ahead for him. "For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake." (Acts 9:16). That rough road included beatings, shipwrecks, weariness, sleeplessness, nakedness, hunger, thirst (2 Cor 11:22-28, and eventually execution. God called Paul a vessel, a piece of pottery chosen to carry Jesus' name to the world. Just as Paul was a chosen vessel for service, so is every believer. Let's get into our study.

1. What are some important decisions you have had to make in your life? Did you seek the advice from others before making that decision?
2. What does it mean to be a chosen vessel for service?
3. What stood out to you during this week's study?

#### Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

#### HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 21:1-7

Paul landed on the beautiful sandy beaches of Tyre and immediately sought out fellow believers to connect with (Acts 21:1-4a). In Tyre, the believers saw with discernment the rough journey ahead and kept saying to Paul he should not set foot in Jerusalem. Paul did not take this as a prohibition, but as information. He was more concerned with the will of God than his physical well-being. Paul did not yield to the counsel of the Christians in Tyre because he knew what God had called him to do.

1. Why is it important to seek out fellow believers? (2 Corinthians 1:4)
2. Why was Paul going to Jerusalem (see 20:22; 24:17)?
3. What did the believers of Tyre discern about Paul's journey ahead? (Acts 21:4)
4. Do you think the Holy Spirit was directly forbidding Paul to go to Jerusalem? Why or why not?
5. Why did Paul did not yield to the counsel of the Christians in Tyre?

#### HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 21:8-14

## **Visitation/Restoration in 2021**

Paul eventually makes it to Caesarea and stayed with Philip, one of the original deacons (Acts 6:1-6) who served as an evangelist in Samaria (8:5). Philip was an associate of Stephen some 20 years earlier and Paul had taken part in Stephen's death. This must have been an interesting meeting. While there in Caesarea, Agabus also prophesied regarding what would happen to Paul in Jerusalem. The prophecy included no instruction to stay away from the city. Agabus's words were perhaps another fulfillment of the Lord's will that Paul would be a martyr (9:16). Those with Paul pleaded with him not to go to Jerusalem. Paul asked them why are you "weeping and breaking my heart" (21:13a). They were looking with their own hearts; Paul was ready to go and fulfill the task the Lord had put before him. "I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die...for the name of the Lord Jesus" (21:13b). Paul heard them and understood their hearts, but he knew the will of God that was before him.

6. The Holy Spirit repeatedly warned Paul both internally and through prophets that danger waited in Jerusalem (see 20:22-25; 21:4,10-13). With what attitude did Paul respond to these warnings (see 20:24; 21:13)?
7. Why do you think the Holy Spirit warned Paul repeatedly of his destiny in Jerusalem? (For instance, did He want Paul not to go? Why do you think so or not?)
8. In your opinion, was Paul right or wrong to go to Jerusalem? Why?
9. Have you ever disagreed with other Christians about what the Spirit was guiding you to do? If so, what were the circumstances, and how did you decide what was right?
10. The best advice you can give someone who feels duty bound is "the Lord's will be done". Why do you think this is true?

### **Applying God's Word**

**What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.**

Paul then went up to Jerusalem and met with James, the half-brother of Jesus. He told James of all the things God had done in his travels among the Gentiles. Then James informs Paul of how many myriads (tens of thousands) of Jewish believers were in Jerusalem, yet there was still more work to be done. Paul's mission was to give a witness to the highest Jews. These leaders would reject him, just as they rejected Jesus; however, many people would not reject him, they listened and even more received Christ. Today, Christianity is the fastest growing religion with over 2.5 billion Christians in the world. Yet there is still work to be done. God has a missionary heart. We need to wake up with an open and humble heart each day and ask God, "what do you want me to do?", and follow His voice. Even the little things matter.

1. When seeking God's will, are you asking God to step into your will, or are you seeking to step into His will? How might you have an open heart and step into His will daily?
2. God's ultimate will is the advancement of his kingdom (Dan 2:44), His glorification (1 Cor 10:31), and the salvation and sanctification of his children through His Son, Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:9). What opportunities, great or small, are available in your life fulfill the advancement of God's will?

### **PRAYER**

Father God, thank you for the Church. May You receive glory and honor, for You created all things. Thank You for those who have come before us and provide an example of what it means to fulfill Your will. Give us open hearts and help us to step into Your will, no matter the cost. May your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

*"You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created." Revelation 4:11*